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AUTHOR Gajewski-Johnson, Marlyce
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ABSTRACT

In order to develop a word processing career file at Milwaukee Area Technical College, employment managers at 124 Milwaukee-area businesses were asked to provide job descriptions for all word processing positions in the company; skill and knowledge requirements necessary to obtain these positions; employee appraisal forms; wage scales; a list of fringe benefits; an annual report; and company recruiting material. Responses were received from 25 companies, indicating that: (1) three distinct career paths were used; i.e., word processing (WP) trainee to WP secretary; correspondence secretary (CS) I to CS II, section leader, and WP supervisor; and CS I to CS II, CS III, and WP supervisor; (2) small companies tended to use the WP trainee to WP secretary path; (3) the career path including the position of section leader was used in decentralized operations, while the path including the correspondence secretary I, II, and III sequence was used in a centralized system; (4) the duties, job requirements, and documents produced by the correspondence secretary I and II positions were basically the same in both the centralized and decentralized systems; and (4) job descriptions for all positions included a statement about confidential documents, proper equipment procedures, rigid workflow and occasional pressure, typing speed, verbal communication skills, and long periods of sitting. Lists of the job duties and requirements for each WP job category are included in the report. (HB)

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WORD PROCESSING JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND DUTIES

by Marlyce Gajewski-Johnson
Secretarial Science Program
Milwaukee Area Technical College

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WORD PROCESSING JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND DUTIES

by Marlyce Gajewski-Johnson

This article will discuss word processing job descriptions and job requirements. It will summarize what Milwaukee-area companies expect from word processing personnel. It will show, to a very limited extent, the career opportunities available in word processing in the Milwaukee area.

In July, a letter was sent to the employment managers of 124 Milwaukee-area businesses. The purpose was to establish a word processing career file with the information received from these companies. Each employment manager was asked to send a copy of seven items:

1. Job descriptions for all word processing positions in the company
2. Skill and knowledge requirements necessary to obtain these word processing positions
3. Employee appraisal form
4. Wage scale (if possible)
5. List of fringe benefits
6. Annual report
7. Company recruiting material.

Responses were received from 25 companies, a 20 percent response. Of the 25 responses, 12 sent information about job descriptions and requirements. Seven of the respondents did not send this information because they did not hire people right out of school (1 respondent), had no word processing openings and did not want to encourage

applicants (3 respondents), could not release the information (1 respondent), or did not have written job descriptions (2 respondents). Two of the 25 respondents had no word processing positions in their companies.

Three distinct career paths are used. They are:

1. Word Processing Trainee to WP Secretary
2. Correspondence Secretary I, II, Section Leader, and WP Supervisor
3. Correspondence Secretary I, II, III, and WP Supervisor.

The specific duties, requirements, and documents produced for each job are given in List 1.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the above information:

1. Small companies use the WP Trainee to WP Secretary career path. The WP Secretary's job descriptions did not state to whom the secretary reports. Nor did they indicate who prepares and maintains the wp budget, who evaluates and recommends equipment, who orders supplies, or who is responsible for calling the repair service. No mention was made of a production log or production records. A conclusion may be drawn that since the company is small, the employer may feel that if the work is being done on time, the system is working adequately. Therefore, no formal reports need be created to document or justify the system.
2. The career path which includes a Section Leader is used in a decentralized wp system. The career path containing a Correspondence Secretary I, II, and III is used in a centralized wp center.

3. The duties, job requirements, and documents produced by the Correspondence Secretary I and II are basically the same in a centralized or decentralized wp system. The career path differs in the position of Section Leader vs. Correspondence Secretary III.The Section Leader performs basically the same supervisory duties in his/her work group as the Correspondence Secretary III performs in the wp center.
4. The WP Supervisor reports to the Assistant VP--Office Systems or to the WP Manager. None of the respondents sent information about these positions.
5. Several names were used to identify the same position. For example: Document Specialist, Correspondence Specialist, Correspondence Secretary, WP Operator, WP Transcriptionist.

Job descriptions for all positions included a statement about each of the following:

1. Confidential documents. All wp personnel have access to confidential documents. They, therefore, must be taught to maintain the confidentiality of the firm.
2. Proper equipment procedures. Since all wp personnel use expensive equipment, they must be trained to use the equipment properly to prevent equipment failure.
3. Rigid workflow and occasional pressure. There is a large amount of work in wp. To maintain an adequate turnaround time, wp personnel will occasionally feel pressure to produce. WP personnel must, therefore, understand what pressure is and be taught how to cope with it.

4. Typing speed. Job requirements for all positions stated that "good typing speed" was required. Only two companies stated an exact typing speed; they were 50 and 65 wpm.
5. Verbal communication skills. WP personnel have contact with people from all organizational levels. WP personnel must, therefore, be skilled in tact and human relations.
6. Long periods of sitting. The majority of job descriptions listed long sedentary periods as a job limitation.

To those educators who have been teaching wp, the results of this study are not surprising. The results, however, can be used to support teaching methods and activities.

List 1: Job Duties and Requirements

WORD PROCESSING SUPERVISOR

Duties:

Reports to Assistant VP--Office Services or WP Manager.
Supervises, coordinates, and controls all individuals in wp center.
Recommends selection of wp equipment to management.
Hires, directs, and trains correspondence secretaries.
Evaluates work performance of correspondence secretaries.
Establishes performance criteria.
Recommends salary increases and promotions.
Hears grievances.
Maintains equipment inventory.
Approves all wp invoices.
Calls repair service.
Maintains repair record.
Attends conferences, seminars, and meetings to remain current.
Maintains production reports.
Prepares and monitors wp annual budget.
Develops, monitors, and updates new procedures and policies for wp.
Works with data processing to develop wp/dp network.
Conducts tours of wp center.

Job Requirements:

High school diploma and 1-3 years experience.
Able to develop and motivate staff.
Able to recognize, interpret, analyze, and forecast trends and needs in equipment and procecures.
Thorough knowledge of company policies and procedures.
Working knowledge of administrative support and information processing.
Good typing and transcription skills.
Good spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
Perform effectively under pressure.
Communicate effectively and discretely.

SECTION LEADER

Duties:

Reports to wp supervisor.
Transcribes from longhand, machine, and typed copy.
Manages storage media.
Duplicates disks containing permanent material.
Submits to supervisor suggestions to improve production.
Submits to supervisor projects not presently on system which could be handled well on system.
Maintains daily production log.
Supervises in absence of wp supervisor, except discipline problems.
Sees that proper turnaround is maintained.
Informs authors of backlog.
Works unsupervised.
Can effectively lay out and format work from raw data.

Job Requirements:
Previous wp experience.
Good punctuation, grammar, spelling, and formatting.
Good proofreading.
Good typing.
Performs effectively under pressure.
Removes pressure from co-workers.
Knowledge of company policies and procedures.
Works with wp supervisor to develop, keyboard, and update department and company manuals.
Sets up and updates file projects.
Works as direct contact with authors.
Directs rush tasks to person who can handle that work effectively.
Calls repair service in absence of supervisor.

CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY III
Duties:
Transcribes from machine, longhand, and typed copy.
Acts as secretarial relief.
Guides and directs other correspondence secretaries.
Handles confidential documents.
Reports to wp supervisor.
Answers production questions posed by correspondence secretaries.
Manages storage media.
Duplicates disks containing permanent materials.
Submits more efficient production procedures to supervisor.
Maintains daily log of production work.
Assists supervisor in training correspondence secretaries, ordering supplies, and evaluating equipment.
Maintains daily production log.
Prepares monthly department reports.
Plans and arranges own work.
Insures system security by maintaining and updating operator profiles to limit access to documents, files, and restricted system functions.
Demonstrates system capabilities to interested company personnel.

Job Requirements:
High school and 2 years college training in wp.
2-5 years experience.
Math skills.
Written and verbal communication skills.
Good spelling, punctuation, grammar and formatting.
Good proofreading.
Good typing.
Works effectively under pressure.
Knowledge of internal administrative support, information processing, and photocopy systems.
Specialized terminology for specific company.
Knowledge of company policies and procedures.
Works with minimal supervision.
Can lay out and format from raw data.

Documents Produced:
Letters, memos, reports, minutes, statistical documents, confidential documents.

CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY II
Duties:
Keyboards and edits documents.
Transcribes from machine, longhand, and typed copy.
Works as secretarial relief.
Reports to wp supervisor.
Manages storage media.
Duplicates permanently stored documents.
Proofreads own work.
Maintains daily porduction log.
Works as relief for pickup and delivery.
Revises work of correspondence secretary III when needed.
Suggests to supervisor more efficient production procedures.
Uses math feature of equipment.
Plans and arranges own work.

Job Requirements:
High school education.
1-4 years of courses in wp and office procedures or 1-4 years of related job experience.
Transcribing experience.
Math ability.
Written and verbal skills.
Understands formatting.
Good typing.
Good spelling, punctuation, and grammar.
Able to use reference books and materials.
Able to sit for long time.

Documents Produced:
Letters, memos, reports, rough drafts, minutes, charts, speeches.

CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY I
Duties:
Transcribes from machine dictation.
Keyboards and edits.
Acts as secretarial relief.
Reports to wp supervisor.
Picks up and distributes mail.
Makes photocopies.
Sends telexs and TWX's.

Job Requirements:
High school education.
3-12 months of courses in wp and office prodcedures or 3-12 months of related job experience.

Documents Produced:
Letters, memos, reports, forms, schedules, tables, rough drafts, contracts, statistical reports.

WORD PROCESSING SECRETARY
Duties:
Keyboards and edits.
Types from machine dictation, longhand, and typed copy.
Makes format changes.
Assists in developing procedures.
Contacts originator for clarification of data.
Manages storage media.
Keeps work area neat and orderly.
Acts as secretarial relief.

Job Requirements:
High school or equivalent education.
Good grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
Six months' experience.
WP experience desirable.
Good dexterity.
Good health.
Able to sit for long time.
Highly organized.
Good logic and judgment.
Group work atitude.

Documents Produced:
Correspondence, manuscripts, proposals.

WORD PROCESSING TRAINEE
Duties:
Keyboards and edits.
Reports to wp supervisor.
Acts as messenger to and from wp center.
Files.
Makes photocopies.
Adds current inserts into wp library resource books.
Brings work to wp center and logs work in.
Manages storage media.
Work is proofread by wp supervisor before delivery.

Job Requirements:
Good typing.
Good grammar, spelling, and punctuation.
Good oral communication.
Accurate filing.

Documents Produced:
Short charts, memos, letters.

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8118 Math-Sciences Building
University of California
Los Angeles, California 90024